

How to Share Contacts Using Electronic Business Cards in Outlook

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Business cards are a great way to share information about yourself and your company when you want to network with others-potential clients, employees, employers, businesses whose services you want to use, friends, and so on. However, relying on printed business cards alone can be risky: You and the people you give them to can lose them, misplace them, or run out just when encountering a valuable contact. A handy solution is electronic business cards, called vCards (virtual business cards), which you can send in e-mail using Outlook 2000 or 2002.

Think how much handier it'll be for recipients when your business card is stored on their computers. No more digging through briefcases or wallets for a little piece of paper! And think how much easier it'll be for them to share your information with others when they can send your electronic business card to anyone they exchange e-mail with.

Before you can send a vCard, you must enter in Contacts the information for the person whose business card you're going to send. This includes adding an entry for yourself if you're going to send your own business card.

To send a vCard

1. In your Outlook Contacts, enter information for the person whose business card you want to send. (If you've already done this, go to step 2.) On the **File** menu, point to **New**, and then click **Contact**. In the **Full Name** box, type a name for the contact. Enter any additional contact information.
2. **Tip** To quickly create an entry in Contacts for another individual, open a message you received from them, right-click on the sender's name in the **From** line, and then click **Add to Contacts** on the shortcut menu.
3. Send the vCard to the individual you want to receive it. In the open contact, on the **Actions** menu, click **Forward as vCard**. Outlook attaches the contact information in a vCard file called <contactname>.vcf

Note You can automatically include a vCard every time you send a message. Just add the vCard to your signature!

Outlook does not save a copy of <contactname>.vcf on your hard disk when you send the

vCard directly from Contacts. This means that you'll need to open Contacts each time you want to send someone's vCard. If you want more flexibility in distributing a vCard—for example, if you want to be able to insert a vCard in a message that you've already started composing or in other Outlook items—save the file for that vCard to a convenient location where you can access it.

To save a vCard file to a convenient location

1. Click **Contacts**, and then select the contact you want to open. On the **File** menu, point to **Open**, and then click **Selected Items**.
2. In the contact, on the **File** menu, click **Export to vCard**. Specify the location where you want to save the file, and then click **Save**. When you want to insert the file in an item that you have opened, on the **Insert** menu in the item, click **File**, and then select the .vcf file.

When you receive a vCard file from someone else, you can transfer the information to Contacts to automatically create a contact for that person. Once the information is in Contacts, you can forward it at any time as a vCard.

To transfer to Contacts vCard information sent to you

1. In the message that contains the vCard you received, double-click the vCard attachment.
2. Add any other information you want about the contact, and then on the **File** menu, click **Save and Close**.

Only the information in the vCard is saved. Outlook does not save a copy of the vCard file itself (except in the original message). This means you're limited to distributing that person's vCard from Contacts (or from the original message). As stated above, you'll have more flexibility if you save the vCard file to a convenient location.

To save to disk a vCard file sent to you

1. In the message that contains the vCard you received, on the **File** menu, click **Save Attachments**.
2. Specify the location where you want to save the vCard file, and then click **Save**.

If someone gives you a disk or directs you to a location where they've stored one or more vCard files, you can import that information into Contacts.